

**DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION SERVICES  
COMMITTEE FOR ACCESSIBLE TRANSPORTATION**

**Meeting Minutes**

**Date:** Thursday, October 25, 2018  
**Time:** 9:00 a.m.  
**Place:** Frank Fasi Municipal Building, 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor Conference Room  
650 South King Street, Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

**Voting Members Present:**

<b>Access to Independence:</b>	Kwee Ann Yap-Fukunaga
<b>Aloha Independent Living Hawaii:</b>	Roxanne Bolden
<b>At Large:</b>	Donald Sakamoto
<b>Catholic Charities Hawaii:</b>	Peter Reyes
<b>Hawaii Disability Rights Center:</b>	Verna Waikiki
<b>KOKUA Program UH Manoa:</b>	Ann Ito

**Ex-Officio Members Present:**

<b>State Dept. of Health, Developmental Disabilities Division:</b>	Vivian Minamishin
<b>Disability and Communication Access Board:</b>	Bryan Mick, Kirby Shaw
<b>Public:</b>	
<b>Office of Councilmember Ron Menor:</b>	Mark Watanabe
<b>Other:</b>	Rose Pou

**Department of Transportation Services (DTS):**

Marisa Ideta, Scott Ishiyama,  
Karisha Lawas, Eric Stoetzer, Geri  
Ung

**I. Call to Order**

Vice Chair D. Sakamoto called the meeting to order at 9:02 a.m.

**II. Approval of Minutes**

The minutes of the June 27, 2018 meeting were unanimously approved after discussing the statement that "B. Mick noted that there seems to be two letters that have been sent – one directly to the City Council and the other to the DTS" found on Page 3, Paragraph 3. E. Stoetzer stated that upon discussion with Rate Commission's (RC) Meeting Coordinator, it was determined that the RC gave three (3) copies of their recommendation to the DTS but only one (1) copy was distributed as an attachment to the DTS' letter of recommendation submitted to the Mayor. B. Mick firmly holds that the RC directly provided a copy of their recommendation to the City Council.

**III. New Business**

V. Waikiki was introduced as the new Hawaii Disability Rights Center representative. She has been an advocate for her agency for over fifteen years. She handles active cases and facilitates trainings and outreaches to parents and communities on a variety of disability rights topics.

A. Fare Increase Proposal Update

E. Stoetzer reported that the DTS' proposed bill, Bill 66 (2018), failed to pass the First Reading at the City Council. Bill 66 took the RC's recommendations and made some modifications to recommended TheBus and TheHandi-Van fare structure. Bill 66 proposed a TheHandi-Van fare increase from \$2.00 to \$2.50 and did not recommend a low income fare based on the Paratransit Growth Management Study. The Study found that TheHandi-Van demand has grown at five percent (5%) annually, which is not sustainable. Research on other agencies implementing a low income fare structure found that the ten percent (10%) of riders in this category generate twenty percent (20%) of the total paratransit trips. Extrapolating this to TheHandi-Van service would result further increases in demand growth.

Chair Martin instead drafted Bill 77 (2018) which reflects all of the RC's recommendations and is scheduled for First Reading at the November 14, 2018 City Council meeting. Under Bill 77, TheHandi-Van fare would increase from \$2.00 to \$2.25 with a \$1.00 fare for eligible low income riders who receive Supplemental Security Income (SSI). Bill 77's implementation date is on January 1, 2019, which is shorter than the usual three (3) months advanced notification provided to the public.

K. Shaw suggested that DTS track the percentage of the low income riders and their impact on TheHandi-Van service over time to provide concrete data to the Council that support DTS' claims on the negative impact of a low income fare. S. Ishiyama stated that DTS' earlier proposal recommended a monthly cap on low income trips to minimize their impact. DTS does not request income information since this information is not required for paratransit eligibility determinations, but DTS will consider this suggestion.

D. Sakamoto inquired regarding the Civil Beat article on Bill 66 by Marcel Honore, which estimated that there are 500 people who would qualify for a low income fare based on SSI. E. Stoetzer replied that this number was estimated by extrapolating Marin County data against the number of people in Honolulu receiving SSI as reported by U. S. Census Data.

B. Mick inquired whether studies were done on the purpose for TheHandi-Van riders' trips. Eight or nine years ago, Emergency Services found that five percent (5%) of ambulance users use the service twenty percent (20%) of the time. They did a demographic study thinking to see if there were ways to proactively reduce the need for that group to use the ambulance frequently, and he believes that the same type of study for TheHandi-Van service may be beneficial. E. Stoetzer responded that there are no such studies currently, but next year DTS has requested funding for rider surveys which could include these types of questions.

## B. Triennial Review Update

S. Ishiyama stated that the City receives funding assistance from the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) for its public transit system. Every three years, the FTA reviews the City's compliance with federal requirements that include grant management and reporting, civil rights laws including the Americans with Disabilities Act and Title VI, and drug and alcohol testing. This year's review was conducted in August. For the purpose of this meeting, Ishiyama would speak to the review areas related to TheHandi-Van.

The reviewers used the term "subrecipients" to refer to both actual subrecipients of federal funds (i.e. Lanakila, Goodwill, etc.) through the City, and also to contractors paid entirely with local funds.

There were several findings related to the City's compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) complementary paratransit service standards. First, the City's monitoring reports show multiple pickups that were scheduled at the same time. This sometimes happens when the scheduling system is not able to generate a solution for a caller and the caller is then given the time they requested, for example 10:00 a.m. When regrouping the trips afterward, the system will assign scheduled pickup times near 10:00 a.m. Another contributing factor is subscription trip templates that showed on the hour pickup times in the past and have not have been updated to reflect actual pickup times. OTS has addressed this issue in the past and needs to update their subscription templates.

The second ADA paratransit finding was that telephone hold times did not meet TheHandi-Van's standard of ninety five percent (95%) of calls answered within three (3) minutes, and was measured at fifty six percent (56%) in one sample month. Part of the reason is longer phone calls from a recent

influx of new riders who are not prepared with the necessary information to make trip reservations. DTS and OTS are discussing how to resolve this. Performance within the past four to six months had reached as high as seventy or eighty percent.

The reviewers also noted a lack of documentation of meetings held to resolve performance issues. DTS' response to these findings will include new standard operating procedures that indicate how frequently DTS monitors the service and documents discussions.

There is existing documentation of TheHandi-Van performance. TheHandi-Van monthly performance report includes both on-the-road operating statistics (i.e. trips provided, passengers, miles, etc.) as well as telephone statistics. It also includes statistics such as average weekday ridership, cost per trip, number of unique riders, on time performance, productivity, vehicle availability, and trip length relative to the fixed route bus. C. Townsend clarified that the trip length analysis incorporates the thirty (30) minute pickup window, walking time to and from the bus stop, and waiting until the bus arrives.

The Estimated Van Arrival (EVA) system created by OTS also allows DTS and OTS to look at trips in greater detail for a period of time or a specific rider. The new SOP will codify what DTS and OTS have largely already been doing by having meetings to discuss ways to address potential issues indicated by TheHandi-Van Monthly Performance Reports and E. Stoetzer's monitoring of the EVA system.

Other areas related to TheHandi-Van are the Title VI and Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE) programs. Title VI is a federal mandate that no one can be excluded from participating in, benefiting from, or be discriminated against based on race, color, or national origin. The City's Title VI plan is presently being updated and will cover both TheHandi-Van and TheBus. Some of TheHandi-Van's vital documents including TheHandi-Van Riders' Guide were posted to the DTS website as PDFs, and the reviewers found that the website cannot automatically translate into the languages that the City's current plan identifies as needing assistance. DTS has since posted the Riders' Guide in a format that the website can automatically translate.

The current Title VI Plan identifies the languages requiring assistance as Chuukese, Marshallese, Chinese, Japanese, Korean, Tagalog, Ilokano and Vietnamese. The website translates all of these languages except for Chuukese, Ilokano and Marshalese. DTS is looking into ways for translating the Riders' Guide and notifying our riders of vital information on a document by document basis. Longer term, DTS is considering working with the City's IT Department to start automatically translating documents into all identified languages. TheBus presently translates each of its vital documents.

DTS is also developing standard procedures for its reviews of each subrecipient's Title VI plan and how well they implement and meet the requirements set forth in their plans. DTS plans to conduct annual reviews of all subrecipients' Title VI plan compliance and to review their actual plan every three years, which is the same frequency as the City's plan is required to be updated. K. Shaw inquired whether the DTS gets many Title VI complaints. S. Ishiyama responded that since 2005 he has not seen any for paratransit and can't speak for fixed route.

The DBE program requires that the City give maximum opportunity to minority or women owned businesses in City contracts. DTS is required to certify in writing that all our contractors are monitored for DBE compliance. For paratransit subrecipients, this is achieved through the monthly DBE participation report which certifies the amount of funding that went to a contractor and any of its DBE subcontractors. The contracts that DTS Paratransit directly administers normally do not have subcontracting opportunities as these agencies use their own staff to drive their own clients. DTS is documenting this process for its Triennial response. DTS' Paratransit will coordinate its DBE monitoring with the DTS Federal Compliance Branch, which has the primary responsibility for ensuring DTS' DBE compliance.

D. Sakamoto inquired whether the DTS was able to find a replacement for J. Kerr who was the Senior Planner who managed the DTS' Human Services Transportation Coordination Program (HSTCP). S. Ishiyama confirmed that J. Kerr left the City in May and that M. Ideta was just promoted into Kerr's position yesterday. DTS' next task is to fill M. Ideta's former position which supports her present role.

D. Sakamoto asked C. Townsend for the percent of subscription riders and the maximum allowed. C. Townsend did not have the figures at hand and stated that riders can still qualify to receive subscription trips. Subscription trips include not only people with developmental disabilities going to day programs but also those who are going to work or dialysis. Dialysis has taken up a tremendous amount of subscription capacity and cannot be late.

C. Townsend added that TheHandi-Van may not be appropriate for medically fragile dialysis patients. Some are very disoriented and tired after dialysis and some have incontinence issues. She believes there is a need for providers to reassess whether TheHandi-Van is appropriate for these patients as TheHandi-Van is public transit and not specialized medical transportation.

In response to D. Sakamoto, S. Ishiyama responded that the due date for all Triennial Review responses to FTA is January 14<sup>th</sup>, 2019.

C. TheHandi-Van Eligibility Center

G. Ung reported that the City's Budget and Fiscal Services Department is finalizing the contract with the successful Proposer. DTS expects the contract to be signed by both parties soon. There will be no change in TheHandi-Van eligibility process. Also, the location of the Eligibility Center will remain the same. All parties including the new contractor are planning for a seamless transition.

D. Nelson\Nygaard Taxi Subsidy Study Update

E. Stoetzer reported that consultant David Koffman is refining the taxi subsidy study section of the Nelson\Nygaard Management Performance Review report. Nelson\Nygaard is now preparing a final draft for the DTS Administration's review and approval before it can proceed to final printing and release to the public.

DTS has requested funding for an initial pilot program in its FY2020 budget. According to the preliminary recommendations, a successful pilot program will require: (1) the ability to provide equivalent service to riders who need accessible vehicles, (2) taxi companies willing to participate in the program, and (3) sufficient funding.

Regarding service equivalency, the experience in Washington DC, which was specific to Uber and Lyft, was that riders who need accessible vehicles need to call the day before while ambulatory riders can call for a ride on the same day. This difference may be acceptable for a demonstration project. If the project proves to be promising, this may influence companies to invest in their own accessible fleet. While a taxi subsidy program appears to offer potential benefits to TheHandi-Van, its success over the long term has yet to be demonstrated.

K. Shaw inquired whether the State, City and County of Honolulu, or other Hawaii Counties will work together on a legislation to provide tax incentives for private companies to invest in accessible vehicles. This would benefit everyone by having more accessible vehicles on the road. S. Ishiyama responded that DTS has discussed this with Nelson\Nygaard but has not had any discussions with the State. In some other states, Nelson\Nygaard cited an example where companies with accessible vehicles can jump to the front of the queue at the airport. This has encouraged private companies as it provides more opportunity for them to get more trips. DTS is aware that there are a lot of creative ideas on how to incentivize private companies but has not had time to explore them further.

R. Bolden inquired whether DTS has information on how many accessible vehicles are in operation in Honolulu. She attended the Disability Conference in Denver, and the event organizers are now looking into having the 2020 Disability Conference in Honolulu with AILH's assistance. She's concerned that transportation will be an issue especially with 400 people with disabilities who attended the conference in Denver, which usually falls in October. C. Townsend shared that TheCab has 16 accessible vehicles in their fleet. TheHandi-Van's biggest vehicle can fit five (5) or six (6) wheelchairs. That doesn't take into account, though, the regular 6,000 trips that TheHandi-Van service needs to accommodate daily. C. Townsend further shared that the experience of people with disabilities in Denver might be different here in Honolulu especially in terms of riding the bus, which

also provides accessible transportation. Bus riders in Hawaii may not show tolerance for the extended time needed for a person with a disability to board the bus and secure their mobility device.

R. Pou commented that non-collapsible walkers and rollators are becoming a problem in TheBus because they are blocking the aisles. She asked if there is a way to restrict manufacturers of these products into making collapsible products only. She suggested that a discussion with Medicare and Medicaid might be beneficial so that they don't just blindly buy these non-collapsible mobility aids for their clients if they knew that they are an issue in the buses. K. Shaw inquired if there is any rule in TheBus that may be enforced to resolve this problem. C. Townsend responded that there is a Health and Safety rule.

#### **IV. Other Business**

In response to a question from D. Sakamoto regarding voting members of the CAT, S. Ishiyama confirmed that the members of the CAT are the agencies themselves, not the individual who represents an agency, with the exception of the at-large member. Therefore, anyone from the agency may attend CAT meetings on behalf of the agency.

D. Sakamoto proposed setting up the meeting dates for next year. S. Ishiyama suggested doing this at the next meeting so that everyone can refer to their calendars in finalizing the meeting dates. G. Ung suggested that the next meeting be sometime February or early March. DTS will email proposed dates for the next meeting to the committee members.

D. Sakamoto asked whether the CAT members are interested in a tour of OTS's Paratransit facility. He will coordinate a date directly with interested CAT members.

C. Townsend shared the following:

- On October 1, 2018, Ali'i Care Transport owned by James Makuakane who is based in Kaneohe has joined TheHandi-Van as a new taxi provider. He currently assigns two (2) accessible vehicles to TheHandi-Van with plans to eventually increase up to four (4). He has agreed to serve the Windward side and take trips into Honolulu up to Pearl City and Kahala Mall, then back to Kaneohe/Kailua. Ali'i Care Transport will supplement Procure who only services within the boundaries of the Windward area.
- There will be no increase in the current TheHandi-Van fleet of 190 until 2020. Older vehicles scheduled for replacement will be replaced at that time.
- Currently, fewer trips are being assigned to supplementary providers as TheHandi-Van continues to hire more drivers.
- Plans to have 100% of TheHandi-Van fleet converted to use tablets instead of Mobile Data Terminals (MDTs) by July 2018 have been pushed back due to a four-month delay by the manufacturer of the tablet mounts. Some vans are now lacking MDTs that were removed and installed in TheBus fleet, which impacts Trapeze data collection and communication with the drivers of these particular vans. The switchover has now been pushed back to December 2018.

K. Lawas informed members that DTS is currently updating its Title VI Plan. It is scheduled to be available for public review and comments by February or March 2019. Outreach will also be done through Neighborhood Boards and through links to the new Plan on the DTS website. No details are yet available on whether a public meeting will be held as in the past. The Fixed Route Operations Branch is leading this project and will be able to provide additional information once available.

D. Sakamoto announced that the CFADAR will be having its next meeting at the State Capitol 3<sup>rd</sup> floor, Room 309 on November 13, 2018 from 9:45 a.m. to 11:45 a.m.

#### **V. Close**

There being no further business, it was moved and seconded that the meeting be adjourned.

D. Sakamoto adjourned the meeting at 10:20 a.m.